

Message Text

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SUBJECT: SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S RESPONSES TO JOURNALISTS'
QUESTIONS

FOLLOWING ARE TEXTS OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS OF NEWSMEN ON ARRIVAL BRUSSELS AIRPORT THURSDAY
MORNING DECEMBER 6 AND ON ARRIVAL AT NATO HEADQUARTERS FRIDAY
MORNING DECEMBER 7.

1. AIRPORT ARRIVAL DECEMBER 6: I AM DELIGHTED TO BE BACK IN
BRUSSELS FOR WHAT IS GOING TO BE A LIVELY AND, I HOPE, USEFUL
SESSION OF THE NATO MINISTERS. I'M PREPARED TO TAKE ANY
QUESTIONS THAT YOU MAY HAVE.

Q. MR. SECRETARY, WILL YOU BE EXPLAINING TO THE ALLIES THIS WEEK
THE DETAILS OF YOUR PLANS TO CLOSE VARIOUS FACILITIES IN
WESTERN EUROPE?

A. I'LL HAVE TO LOOK INTO THAT. I'M NOT SURE THAT THE CLOSURES
THAT WE HAVE ANNOUNCED ON A WORLDWIDE BASIS, WHICH INVOLVE SOME
SMALL FACILITIES LARGELY FOR EFFICIENCY PURPOSES, ARE MATTERS
THAT IMPACT ON THE STRATEGY OF THE ALLIANCE. I'LL HAVE TO
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CHECK INTO THE CURRENT STATUS OF THAT.

Q. MR. SECRETARY, DO YOU EXPECT TO HEAR A CONCERTED PLAN TO SHARE
THE BURDEN OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DURING

YOUR STAY HERE?

A. NO, I THINK THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO EXPLORE WITH OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ACHIEVE MORE EQUITABLE BURDEN SHARING, BUT I DOUBT THAT WE WILL FORMULATE A GRANDIOSE PLAN.

Q. DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE IDEA OF AN INDEPENDENT DEFENSE SYSTEM IN EUROPE...SOME COUNTRIES THINKING ABOUT IT? (INDISTINCT)

A. THE QUESTION RELATES TO AN INDEPENDENT DEFENSE SYSTEM FOR EUROPE. I'M NOT SURE WHETHER THAT REFERS TO GREATER INTEGRATION OF EUROPEAN DEFENSE CAPABILITIES OR WHETHER IT REFERS TO ONE THAT IS INDEPENDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER FORCES. TO THE EXTENT THAT IT REFERS TO THE FIRST, THE UNITED STATES HAS CONTINUALLY ENCOURAGED GREATER INTEGRATION OF EUROPEAN DEFENSE FORCES. NEXT YEAR WE SHALL CELEBRATE--IF THAT IS THE APPROPRIATE PHRASE--THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VETOING OF THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE COMMUNITY WHICH WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY THE UNITED STATES IN AN EARLIER PERIOD OF TIME. IF EUROPE WISHES TO MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF GREATER INTEGRATION OF THEIR OWN DEFENSE ACTIVITIES, THAT, I THINK, WOULD BE HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS BOTH FROM THE STANDPOINT OF EUROPE AND FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE ALLIANCE. WITH REGARD TO THE GREATER INDEPENDENCE OF EUROPE, THAT IS A CHOICE THAT THE INDIVIDUAL EUROPEAN STATES MUST MAKE. BUT THE UNITED STATES AT THIS POINT PROVIDES APPROXIMATELY TWO-THIRDS OF THE TOTAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF THE ALLIANCE AND IT PROVIDES THE NUCLEAR UMBRELLA FOR THE ALLIANCE AS WELL AS THE INTELLIGENCE AND RECONNAISSANCE CAPABILITIES. AS A MATTER OF REALITY, EUROPE COULD MOVE OVER THE PERIOD OF A DECADE OR MORE TOWARDS ACHIEVING DEFENSE INDEPENDENCE, BUT IN THE SHORT RUN THAT IS NOT AN OPTION THAT IS SERIOUSLY OPEN TO HER.

2. NATO HEADQUARTERS ARRIVAL DECEMBER 7:

Q. I WONDER IF I CAN ASK YOU WHAT'S THE MAIN POINT YOU WILL TRY TO MAKE TODAY IN THIS MEETING, MR. SECRETARY?
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A. I THINK THAT THE MAIN POINT IS THAT WE HAVE HAD THE LUXURY AMONGST OUR WESTERN DEMOCRACIES OF THINKING THAT THERE IS SOME ALTERNATIVE TO A COMMON EFFORT ON AN EFFECTIVE DEFENSE CAPABILITY; AND THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO THIS KIND OF COMMON EFFORT. WE ALL HAVE TO RECOGNIZE THAT IT WILL REQUIRE ALL OF THE DEMOCRACIES TO PROVIDE THE RESOURCES NECESSARY WITHOUT ANY ILLUSION--AN ILLUSION THAT OCCURS OCCASIONALLY OVER HERE ON THE OTHER SIDE---THAT, SOMEHOW THE UNITED STATES CONTRIBUTION COULD BE ELIMINATED AND STILL THE ALLIANCE WOULD BE MILITARILY EFFECTIVE.

Q. SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT YOU ARE GOING TO ASK THE ALLIES TO SPEND MORE. YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE A BIGGER CONTRIBUTION ON THE PART

OF THE ALLIES?

A. THAT'S RIGHT--THAT'S THE PRINCIPAL AND CENTRAL MEANING OF BURDEN SHARING IN MY MIND. ALL MEETINGS OF NATO ARE REFERRED TO AS DRAMATIC. THIS ONE WILL BE MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN MOST. I THINK THAT THERE IS A TENDENCY TO TALK ABOUT THE DISSOLUTION OF NATO. IT HAS BEEN TALKED ABOUT FOR 15 YEARS. THERE WAS A GENERAL OFFICER IN THE PENTAGON WHO USED TO KEEP A RUBBER STAMP ON HIS DESK THAT SAID--"AT THIS CRITICAL MOMENT IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE ALLIANCE". BUT THIS IS, I THINK, A WATERSHED PERIOD FOR THE ALLIANCE. I THINK THAT WE ARE ALL GOING TO HAVE TO PULL TOGETHER, AND I THINK THAT THERE IS AN ATTITUDE ON THIS SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC WHICH WILL MAKE THAT A REALITY.

Q. NOW LET ME ASK YOU ONE MORE QUESTION--HOW SERIOUS ARE THE DISAGREEMENTS NOW WITHIN THE ALLIANCE?

A. I DON'T THINK THAT WITH REGARD TO THE PROBLEMS OF EUROPEAN SECURITY THERE ARE SERIOUS DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. I THINK THAT WE TAKE EUROPEAN SECURITY VERY SERIOUSLY, AND WE ARE URGING OUR ALLIES--SOME OF WHOM HAVE NOT YET SEEN THE NECESSITY--TO TAKE THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES EQUALLY SERIOUSLY. THAT'S IN THE COMMON INTEREST OF ALL OF US--THE UNITED STATES AS WELL AS THE EUROPEAN NATIONS.
RUMSFELD

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